



Hendry County Sheriff's Office

General Order 5.4

TITLE: Written Directive System	SHERIFF'S APPROVAL: Digital
ORIGINATION DATE: May 10, 2018	REVISION DATE: May 25, 2019
RELATED REFERENCES: CFA: 2.01M, 3.01M	
REVIEW FREQUENCY: 3 YEARS	DATE OF NEXT REVIEW: May 25, 2022

I. PURPOSE: To establish procedures for the preparation, indexing and distribution of written directives within the agency and to provide requirements for employees to familiarize and maintain knowledge of the written directive system.

II. SCOPE: This order shall apply to all sheriff's office members.

III. POLICY: It is the policy of the Hendry County Sheriff's Office to maintain a system for the dissemination of written directives and information in the most timely, efficient and effective manner, and to keep each member current and up-to-date with the most accurate information available relating to agency functioning.

IV. PROCEDURE:

A. Authority: Written directives shall not be construed to abridge or expand the rights of any person under the Constitution or statutes of the United States of America, the State of Florida, or the ordinances of Hendry County. No written directives issued at any level of command shall conflict with established written directives by a higher authority.

B. Creation or Revision: The creation, revision, amendment or rescindment of any general order, division or section manual, policy, procedure, rule or regulation within the agency, shall be by official written directive. All directives shall be stated in precise and positive terms with grammatical accuracy.

1. **Memoranda:** Any general order, division or section manual, policy, procedure, rule or regulation may be temporarily revised by memorandum prior to the issuance of an updated general order, division or section manual, policy, procedure, rule or regulation, if approved by the sheriff or his/her designee.

C. Sheriff's Authority: The sheriff or sheriff's designee expressly reserves the exclusive right to unilaterally amend or cancel any directive, policy, procedure, or general order.

When any directive, policy, procedure or general order is subject to more than one interpretation, the interpretation of the sheriff or his/her designee shall be final. To ensure the involvement of a broad spectrum of Sheriff's Office members and, as appropriate, local citizens, in the development of agency policies the sheriff may use requisite forums for suggestion and/or input when necessary. Where any directive, policy, procedure or general order says "sheriff" that shall also mean the sheriff's designee.

- D. Cancellations and Amendments:** The authority for the issuing command to cancel or amend a written directive is restricted to those members who are authorized to issue written directives. The sheriff and staff shall be given notice of cancelled or amended policy decisions. The sheriff has final authority.
- E. Responsibility:** Members shall be held responsible for knowledge of, and compliance with, the contents of applicable written directives, including general orders and relevant division or section manuals, policies, procedures, rules, regulations and memoranda. The professional standards section shall monitor compliance with the agency's written directives through regular reviews and inspections.
- F. Supervisor Responsibilities:** Each supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the members under his/her supervision understand the agency's general orders, applicable division or section manuals, policies, procedures, rules, regulations and memoranda, and that they have acknowledged updates by their electronic signature in PowerDMS, where appropriate. This shall be accomplished by periodic inspections and shall include inquiry as to the member's knowledge of written directive content. Further, supervisors are to ensure that their members are aware of memoranda relating to the agency's general orders, relevant division or section manuals, policies, procedures, rules and regulations, within (10) days of issuance.
- G. General Orders:** General orders are permanent written directives issued by the sheriff relating to a matter usually affecting the entire sheriff's office. The sheriff has sole authority to issue a general order. General orders are archived for a minimum of three (3) years by the accreditation section. After three (3) years, they may be placed into storage and archived, per records retention laws.
 - 1. Maintenance of General Orders:** The review schedule for general orders shall be staggered to provide for an orderly review process throughout the review cycle. The accreditation section shall monitor changes in law enforcement policy, legislation, technology and best practices, to ensure that the agency's general orders are current. Each general order shall be reviewed at least once every three years with the following exceptions:
 - a. General orders that require annual review to comply with Florida Accreditation Commission standards, Florida Model Jail Standards and Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies standards for public safety communications.
 - b. As needed to comply with changes to federal law, Florida state statutes, local ordinances and accreditation standards.
 - c. As needed when changes are required, as determined by agency members.

2. **Proposed General Orders:** General orders may be formulated at any level of the organization and proposed through the chain-of-command to the Chief Deputy for approval. Any draft shall follow the established general order format. All proposals shall be reviewed by the accreditation section and checked for compliance with applicable accreditation standards.
 - a. All general orders or written directives shall have a standard format. They shall begin with a specific statement of purpose, followed by its scope, followed by the policy, followed by the procedure, and followed by the glossary. Discussion may be added to the subject matter as deemed necessary.
 - b. The draft of any general order, which will amend or rescind any other general order, shall include notations identifying the affected language.
3. **Recommendations for Revision:** All members are permitted and encouraged to recommend the purging, updating, or revising of any general order or written directive. This is accomplished by memorandum through the chain-of-command to his/her division commander, who shall forward the memorandum to the accreditation section if approved by the Chief Deputy. This memorandum shall include at a minimum:
 - a. Identification of the material that should be purged, updated, or revised.
 - b. The justification for the changes.
 - c. Identification of any new material to be added.
4. **Review of Recommended Changes:** All proposed changes to general orders shall be presented and reviewed in the following manner:
 - a. A rough draft shall be forwarded to the accreditation section in order for a review to be conducted to ensure compliance with Florida accreditation standards. The accreditation section shall prepare a draft for review by the Chief Deputy.
 - b. Drafts may be forwarded to other staff or sheriff's office members who possess specific technical expertise when necessary, to obtain additional input on recommended revisions. However, final approval of any changes shall take place during the review process mentioned in item "a" above.
 - c. Upon final approval by the Chief Deputy, the draft shall be sent to the accreditation section for formatting, printing, dissemination and archiving.
 - d. Changes due to technology, obsolete procedures or legislative law amendments, may be made by the accreditation section with notice to the sheriff or designee, and staff, in order to ensure timely compliance with the changes and the correct dissemination of current practices.
5. **Numbering and Indexing:** The numbering and indexing of all general orders shall be the responsibility of the accreditation section.

6. **Initial Issuance:** The accreditation section shall be responsible for the issuance of an electronic version of the agency's general orders to newly appointed sheriff's office members by means of PowerDMS.

7. **General Orders Format:** General orders shall be formatted as follows:

a. **Numerical Filing:** Each general order shall be numbered consecutively with a number within its appropriate category. Within each category there may be sub-categories to further define the main category. New general orders shall utilize the numbers of any rescinded ones, if available.

- (1) Chapters 1 – 3: Law Enforcement Role, Responsibilities, and Relationships
- (2) Chapters 4 – 6: Organization, Management and Administration
- (3) Chapters 7 – 8: Financial Management
- (4) Chapters 9 –14: Personnel Policies
- (5) Chapters 15 –21: Member Health and Safety
- (6) Chapter 22: Training Policies
- (7) Chapters 23 – 28: Law Enforcement Operations
- (8) Chapters 29 – 32: Operation Support
- (9) Chapters 33 – 34: Traffic Operations
- (10) Chapter 35 – 37: Prisoner and Court Related Activities
- (11) Chapter 38 -39: Auxiliary and Technical Services
- (12) Chapter 40: Additional Operations and Services

b. **Format:** General orders shall conform to the format shown below as closely as possible.

I. Article

A. Paragraph

1. Sub-Paragraph

a. Section

(1) Sub-Section

(a) Clause

c. Explanation of Information Blocks:

- (1) Title Block: General Order.
- (2) Origination Date: The date on which the order was originally implemented.
- (3) Revision Date: The date personnel are responsible for compliance with the revision of said order.
- (4) Review Date: The date that the review process commences.
- (5) Related References: Source material for details, (e.g., general order, statute, author, bibliography, ordinance, memoranda, etc.

8. Dissemination of General Orders: New/revised general orders shall be distributed to all appropriate personnel as follows:

- a. The [Power Data Management System \(PowerDMS\)](#) shall be the primary method of distribution for general orders. Members are required to log in to PowerDMS at least once every two weeks to check their inbox for documents requiring attention (Telecommunications personnel shall be required to login to [PowerDMS](#) at least once per shift for Quality Assurance purposes). Members shall promptly attend to all items by acknowledging receipt and their understanding of the documents, completing the electronic signature portion by entering their user ID and password, and then verifying their identity when prompted.
- b. New/revised general orders shall be distributed on the date they go into effect, allowing sufficient time to implement the procedures in a timely manner and to allow members to become familiar with any changes. Memoranda may be issued when necessary to expedite the implementation of a policy/procedure update or change. Each member shall log in to [PowerDMS](#) and use his/her electronic signature as acknowledgement indicating receipt and understanding of the new/revised general order within (10) days of issuance.
 - (1) Members participating in any of the agency's promotional processes may request an electronic copy of the current general orders manual from the accreditation section.
 - (2) Members who fail to review and electronically sign general orders within (10) days of issuance may be subject to disciplinary action.

H. Division Manuals: Division manuals are permanent written directives issued by a division commander relating to a specific matter affecting a particular division. The division commander shall have sole authority to issue a division manual. Division commanders shall be responsible for monitoring compliance with their division manuals through regular reviews and inspections of assigned personnel. Division manuals are archived for a minimum of three (3) years by the accreditation section. After three (3) years, they may be placed into storage and archived per records retention laws.

1. **Maintenance of Division Manuals:** Division manuals shall be reviewed at least every three years and approved by the division commander(s) or his/her designee with the following exceptions.
 - a. Division manuals that require annual review to comply with Florida Accreditation Commission standards, Florida Model Jail Standards and Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies Standards for public safety communications.
 - b. As needed to comply with changes to federal law, Florida state statutes, local ordinances and accreditation standards.
 - c. As needed when changes are required as determined by agency members.
2. **New Material for Division Manuals:** New material for division manuals may be submitted by any member at any level within his/her area of responsibility. Proposals shall be forwarded to the member's division commander via chain of command for approval. The division commander shall forward approved proposals to the accreditation section which shall ensure compliance with accreditation standards. Once the accreditation section has ensured compliance with accreditation standards, the draft shall then be returned to the appropriate division commander for review and, if approved by the Chief Deputy, inclusion into that division's manual. It is the division commander's responsibility to notify the sheriff via his executive staff about division manual changes.
 - a. All changes to any division manual or policy, procedure, rule or regulation contained therein, shall be copied to the accreditation section for inclusion into the agency's written directive library.
3. **Format:** The format and content for each manual shall be at the discretion and approval of the division commander. At a minimum, each manual shall include an alphabetical index and table of contents. Each policy shall contain the subject title, policy number; origination date, review date and revision date (if any).
4. **Dissemination of Division Manuals:** New/revised division manuals shall be distributed to all appropriate personnel as follows:
 - a. [PowerDMS](#) shall be the primary method of distribution for division manuals. Members are required to log in to PowerDMS at least once a week to check their inbox for documents requiring attention (Emergency Operations Bureau personnel shall be required to login to PowerDMS at least once per shift for Quality

Assurance purposes). Members shall promptly attend to all items by acknowledging receipt and their understanding of the documents, completing the electronic signature portion by entering their user ID and password, and then verifying their identity when prompted.

New/revised division manuals or specific policies within them shall be distributed on the date they go into effect, allowing sufficient time to implement the procedures in a timely manner and to allow members to become familiar with any changes. Memoranda may be issued when necessary to expedite the implementation of a policy/procedure update or change. Each member will log into PowerDMS and use his/her electronic signature as acknowledgement indicating receipt and understanding of the new/revised division manual.

- (1) The most current division manuals shall be available on PowerDMS in the “Documents” section in folders labeled with the respective division manual.
- (2) Members who fail to review and electronically sign their assigned division manual within (10) days of issuance may be subject to disciplinary action.

I. Inspections: The accreditation section is charged with ensuring that all general orders are regularly audited. This auditing process includes the incorporation of all policy memoranda, directives and notices from the past three years into existing orders. The sheriff or designee shall be notified via chain-of-command of any discrepancies discovered during such inspections.

V. GLOSSARY

GENERAL ORDERS: Permanent written directives issued by the sheriff relating to a specific matter usually affecting the entire sheriff’s office. The sheriff shall have sole authority to issue a general order. General orders are archived upon revision via PowerDMS by the professional standards section. Archived policies shall meet, at a minimum all records retention law requirements

DIVISION MANUAL: Written directives stating methods and procedures to be followed by all members, units and sections within the issuing division. Division manuals may include standard operating procedures (SOPs) and post orders. They shall not contradict directives issued at a higher level. They are issued by the division commander through authority of the sheriff. Division manuals are archived via PowerDMS by the accreditation section. Copies are available upon request to the accreditation section.

MEMORANDUM: Notification of an immediate change to a written directive.

Your electronic signature in Power DMS acknowledges you have read this policy and understand it.